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*Reminiscences of early Utah.* By R. N. Baskin, an ex-chief justice of the supreme court of Utah. (Salt Lake City, Utah: R. N. Baskin, 1914. 252 p. \$2.15 net)

This book is written from a non-Mormon viewpoint, and its chief interest lies in the descriptions of the political activities of the Mormon church, and the efforts of the liberal party to break its power. The author was active for many years in Utah politics and he is able to give explanations of many matters hitherto unexplained.

The book describes in considerable detail the methods by which the Mormon church maintained its political power, and the means of punishment, both spiritual and temporal, by which the recalcitrants were held in line. Considerable evidence is produced to show how the territorial legislature practically nullified the laws of congress. Judge Baskin pictures from a viewpoint, somewhat new, the hostility of the church to Gentile immigration, and, in this connection, he holds the Mormon priesthood directly responsible for the murder and robbery of many non-Mormons. He boldly asserts that in the Mountain Meadows massacre Brigham Young, if not the instigator, was at least an accessory after the fact, and that the church appropriated the property of the murdered men and women (ch. 10). He declares further that the church sought to keep out the Gentiles by getting control of all water courses which could be used for irrigation, and by interdicting the development of the mines (ch. 13). On the other side he describes in detail the efforts of the liberal party to get the support of congress.

Whitney's *History of Utah* comes in for severe criticism, and even on questions of fact, its authority is made to appear questionable. Judge Baskin takes issue especially with its denunciations of federal officials in the territory (pp. 34, 46, 61, 215). On the question of education, the author insists that there were no free schools in Utah before the act of 1890 (p. 198). In this he differs from Young (McLaughlin and Hart, *Cyclopedia of American government*). On the whole, even allowing for prejudice, the Mormon church comes off worse than in the general histories.

The term "Reminiscences" is hardly appropriate, for almost every statement is supported by quotations from laws, court decisions, letters, or newspapers. The book is not well planned and there are frequent repetitions. Too much knowledge on the part of the reader is assumed. Although the tone is dispassionate some of the arguments appear forced. The book, however, is an important source for the history of Utah and should make necessary the reëxamination of many facts that have been regarded as settled.

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